

JOEL

THE DAY OF THE LORD

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

- * Joel means “God is the Lord”
 - * Nothing is known about Joel other than his being the son of Pethuel (who is also unknown) 1:1
 - * He was from Judah
 - * Perhaps references to Jerusalem indicate that he was from Jerusalem
 - * He must have been one of the earliest prophets of Judah.
 - * Joel is referred to only once in the NT ([Acts 2:16-21](#)).
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- * **Chapters:** 3
 - * **Verses:** 73

PLACE IN HISTORY

- * Unlike most prophetic writers, Joel gave no explicit indication of his time period.
- * In particular, Joel refrained from mentioning the current ruling kings.
- * One of the most compelling arguments for dating the writing of the book of Joel explains this omission by suggesting the prophecy occurred in the aftermath of Judah's only ruling queen, Athaliah (d. 835 BC).
- * The type of government described in the prophecy (the rule of elders [1:2; 2:16] and priests [1:9, 13; 2:17]) supports the time when Joash became king at age seven
- * Her young grandson, Joash, succeeded Athaliah upon her death.
- * Because Joash was too young to rule, the priest Jehoida ruled in his place until he came of age.
- * So if Joel prophesied during this caretaking period, it would make sense that he mentioned no official king.
- * All of this points to a date of approximately 835 BC or soon after, making Joel one of the earliest writing prophets, as well as a contemporary of the prophet Elisha.

THE PURPOSE OF THE BOOK

Joel calls the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem to lament and return to the Lord during a time of national disaster.

- * A locust plague has destroyed both wine (**1:5, 7, 12**) and grain (**1:10**).
- * This threatens the people's ability to present offerings in the temple (**1:9, 13, 16**).

THREE FOLD PURPOSE OF THE BOOK:

- (1) To warn Judah of the coming Day of the Lord when judgment will get worse for Judah and the nations of the world
- (2) To urge Judah to repent of their sins
- (3) To proclaim a future time when complete restoration will come to the nation

- * No particular mention of Israel's sins is present in the book, but the consequences of the terrible events described are certainly clear:
- * God will one day wipe out all evil and start creation over.
- * But through this destruction also comes eternal protection for those who believe in Him.

THE DAY OF THE LORD

- * Judah is devastated by a vast horde of locusts.
- * This invasion of locusts destroys everything—the fields of grain, the vineyards, the gardens and the trees.
- * Joel symbolically describes the locusts as a marching human army and views all of this as divine judgment coming against the nation for her sins.
- * The “day of the Lord” is cloaked in darkness, armies that conquer like consuming fire, and the moon turning to blood. (Joel 2:1-11)
- * This makes clear the seriousness of God’s judgment on sin
- * In the first chapter, the Day of the Lord is experienced historically by the plague of locusts upon the land.
- * When the plague of locusts and the drought devastated Judah, people might have thought that Joel would encourage the people.
- * Instead Joel said, "You think that was bad? Worse is to come if we don't repent."

TRUE REPENTANCE (JOEL 2:12-13)

- i. Sincere repentance is to **turn to God**, and therefore away from our sin.
- ii. Sincere repentance is done **with all your heart**, giving everything you can in surrender to God.
Rend your heart, and not your garments:
One expression of mourning in Jewish culture is tearing the clothes - but one could tear their garments without tearing their heart
- iii. Sincere repentance is marked by **action (with fasting)** and **emotion (with weeping ... mourning)**. Not every act of repentance will include **fasting** and **weeping**, but if **action** and **emotion** are absent, it isn't real repentance.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK

1. Day of the Lord Experienced: **Historical (1:1-20)**

- Source of the Message ([1:1](#))
- Command to Contemplate the Devastation ([1:2-4](#))
- Completeness of the Devastation ([1:5-12](#))
- Call to Repent in Light of the Devastation ([1:13-20](#))

2. Day of the Lord Illustrated: **Transitional (2:1-17)**

- Alarm Sounds ([2:1](#))
- Army Invades ([2:2-11](#))
- Admonition to Repent ([2:12-17](#))

3. Day of the Lord Described: **Eschatological (2:18-3:21)**

- Introduction ([2:18-20](#))
- Material Restoration ([2:21-27](#))
- Spiritual Restoration ([2:28-32](#))
- National Restoration ([3:1-21](#))